



HERD the News!

March/April 2022

The President's Message:

In my last message I spoke about the upcoming Board of Directors meeting on March 16th. Here is an outline of what occurred.

Our Treasurer, Phil Esnoz, presented a current summary of the status of our bank accounts. He also reviewed our current financial statement. Our accounts are all in the black and we are staying within our budget. Phil also discussed the setting of the per dose price of Footvax at \$1.50/dose. In the past the set price did not take into account the cost increase of the product or the shipping costs. It was figured that we lost over \$20,000 potential income. The new price is hoping to make up for some of that includes the current wholesale price and cost of shipping. The Executive Committee approved the \$1.50/dose price at a special meeting.



ASI held it's convention in San Diego the end of January. You should be able to read all about what went on at the convention in the Sheep Industry magazine which you should have received in the mail. The highlight for CWGA is the donations given by the ASI Guard Dog Fund to help us with our Labor/Wage overtime litigation. We canceled our annual lobbying with ASI in March due to the confusion and constraints caused by Covid 19.

The following individuals were nominated for the various ASI Councils & Committees. Jon Amparan & Ryan Mahoney, Wool Council. John Cubiburu & Ryan Indart, Lamb Council. Ed Anchordoguy & Cameron Lauwers, Legislative Action Council. Dan Macon & Joe Pozzi, PERC. Dr. Rosie Busch & Dr. Melissa Garrod VanLaningham, Animal Health. Lloyd McCabe, Genetic Stakeholders Committee. Frankie Iturriria, Public Lands Committee. John Olagaray, Predator Management Committee. We should find out soon if the appointments were made.

Ryan Indart and Andr e Soares co-chairs of the Labor/Wage Committee reported that the overtime issue litigation is moving forward but we won't see much action until later in the year. George Soares is continuing to work on the legislative/administrative end of this issue.

The Legislative/Government Affairs Committee reported that AB2764 was introduced in the CA Assembly. It was introduced by an Assembly Person who is allied with PETA. The bill will attempt to eliminate any new animal processing facilities in CA. It is in direct conflict with President Biden's action to stimulate and expand the animal processing business. The bill is expected to meet strong opposition.

The Member Services Committee presented a survey which we would like all of you to take and return. All the directions are on it. It is short and should not take up too much time. It will help the leadership of the CWGA know what you would like from your organization and help guide us to get the most out of the organization for you. The survey is in this newsletter. Please take the time to fill it out and return it. Thanks. **Survey is on the last page of the Newsletter**

The 102 CA Ram Sale will be held in Tulare, CA at the International AG Center, on April 9th. It is shaping up to be a great sale. We would encourage all to attend and buy rams. If you are interested in volunteering to help please contact Susan Taylor. The Ram Sale is largest income producer for the CWGA.

The Sheep Commission gave a report. Funding is an issue due to the wool market and that is affecting the programs the Commission can conduct. The idea that the Sheep Commission be

"Delivering Lasting Value to Support all Segments of the California Sheep Industry"

The News at a Glance

- The President's Message
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- Convention
- CWGA Convention
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- Business Advertisements
- Survey

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The Presidents Message continued...

eliminated was brought up. There will be a full discussion as per this idea at our Convention in Minden, NV this summer.

The Range Management Advisory Committee reported that Roger Ingram had given an excellent power point presentation to RMAC concerning Wildfire Prevention through Grazing Committee's survey and assessment of the Targeted Grazing business in California. A short version of his report is in this newsletter. Very good information, worth reading.

Since Covid is over (I think) we had a short discussion as per how meetings are held. Live, Zoom or a hybrid. We will be looking into these issues and will be having more discussion.

Mark your calendars! August 19th & 20th, CWGA Annual Convention, Minden, NV. We will be sending out more information soon.

Well, I hope you made it to the end of this message. Lots of important stuff going on. I hope all is well with you and your family. Pray for rain!

- Ed Anchordoguy

CWAG Wildfire and Grazing Committee Report By: Roger Ingram

The California Woolgrowers Association (CWGA) Wildfire and Grazing Ad Hoc Committee conducted a targeted grazing survey to better determine the size, scope and impact of targeted grazing in California. The survey was conducted December 2020 – March 2021. The survey consisted of 10 questions and was completed via telephone interview. There were 32 targeted grazing providers who completed the survey.


- 75,714 paid acres were grazed by survey respondents. 68,580 paid acres (90.6%) grazed by operations \geq 2,500 head in size
- Top 2 targeted grazing services provided by total paid acres were fuel load reduction (73.7%) and Vineyard/Crop (21%).
- Species managed by 32 surveyed providers were sheep only (12 providers); goats only (4 providers); sheep and goats (16 providers).
- Average number of contracted months was 6.5 with a range of 5.7 to 6.4.
- The top 5 entities targeted grazing services were provided include: Government (29) Private landowners (20), Homeowners' Associations (16), Parks (14 providers), Vineyard/Crop (13 providers). Larger operations (>1,000 head) provided targeted grazing services for solar farms (8 providers).
- Targeted grazing services are being or have been provided in 46 out 58 counties by 32 surveyed providers.
- Targeted grazing was the main source of income of 15 surveyed providers (46.7%).
- The top challenges listed by surveyed respondents: business related, public education, outreach, and animal welfare, animal production, husbandry, and training, and operations.

Implications

- Demand for targeted service grazing will continue to grow due to continued high risk from wildfire in California.
- California will need more targeted grazing service businesses and/or existing ones will need to expand to meet growing demand. Access to capital is needed for starting new or expanding existing businesses.
- There are a limited number of herders that reside in the United States to manage the animals. There is a need for a herder training program.

A presentation on the results of the targeted grazing survey were presented by Roger Ingram to the Range Management Advisory Committee (RMAC) on March 8th. RMAC replied in an email that the presentation brought attention to the important and necessary work that is being done to protect and provide resilience to California communities, and provides an opportunity for RMAC members and the interested public to find synergies and opportunities for increasing the impact and extent of working lands management.

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California Ram Sale

102nd California Ram Sale

Saturday April 9th, 2022

**International Agri-Center
Tulare, California**

WHAT THE CALIFORNIA RAM SALE DOES FOR YOU!

The California Ram Sale is dedicated to providing buyers with educational information and high-quality rams in an effort to improve lamb quality production in California. Crossbred, Hampshire, Suffolk, Composites, Oxfords and White-Face rams are auctioned off in the sale from multiple outstanding, well-established breeders allowing for varying genetics.

All rams are ELISA tested for epididymitis by consignors or rams originate in a certified *Brucella ovis* "free" herd.

In our commitment to meeting the highest quality of standards, all rams are rigorously inspected by UC Davis large animal veterinarians/residents, and sheepmen for soundness, health abnormalities, and structural correctness.

Ultrasound carcass measurements (i.e.: loin eye area, backfat, and weight) are included in the Range Ram Index and are provided on all sale rams. The Range Ram Index utilizes ultrasound carcass data collected at the sale and will help to identify the potential genetic merit of those rams in passing superior genetic traits such as larger loin eye area or heavier carcass weights into producer flocks. The proceeds from the California Ram Sale support CWGA in its efforts to deliver lasting value to support and represent the interests of all California sheep producers and fight for the future prosperity of our sheep industry.

Some of the checklist items:

- Meet minimum weight requirements
- Age
- Weight, back fat, loin eye area, ram index
- Scrotal circumference check
- Physical condition

2022 California Ram Sale

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102nd Annual California Ram Sale Tentative Catalog

Round 1 - Registered Rams

<u>Lot #</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>City, State</u>	<u># Head/Lot</u>	<u>Breed</u>
1	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	1	Donation to CWGA
2	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	1	Suffolk
3	Jim	Neumiller	Healdsburg, CA	1	Suffolk
4	Mike	Mann	New Cuyama, CA	1	Rambouillet-1/2 Donation CWGA
5	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	1	Suffolk

Round 2 - White Face Range Rams

<u>Lot #</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>City, State</u>	<u># Head/Lot</u>	<u>Breed</u>
7	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	2	White Face
8	Cole	Estill	Winnemucca, NV	3	White Face
9	Mike	Mann	New Cuyama, CA	2	White Face
10	David	Hansen	Fairview, UT	2	White Face
11	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	1	White Face
12	Cole	Estill	Winnemucca, NV	3	White Face
13	Mike	Mann	New Cuyama, CA	1	White Face
14	David	Hansen	Fairview, UT	2	White Face
15	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	2	White Face
16	Cole	Estill	Winnemucca, NV	2	White Face
17	Mike	Mann	New Cuyama, CA	2	White Face
18	David	Hansen	Fairview, UT	2	White Face
19	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	1	White Face
20	David	Hansen	Fairview, UT	2	White Face
21	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	1	White Face
22	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	1	White Face

Highest Indexing Blackface Ram

<u>Lot #</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>City, State</u>	<u># Head/Lot</u>	<u>Breed</u>
23					

Highest Indexing Blackface Pen

<u>Lot #</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>City, State</u>	<u># Head/Lot</u>	<u>Breed</u>
24					

Round 3 - Suffolk Range Rams

<u>Lot #</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>City, State</u>	<u># Head/Lot</u>	<u>Breed</u>
25	Joseph	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	5	Suffolk
26	Matt	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	5	Suffolk
27	David	Hansen	Fairview, UT	4	Suffolk
28	Kurt & Carol	Heupel	Weldona, CO	4	Suffolk
29	Joel	Shepherd	Moroni, UT	5	Suffolk
30	Jim	Neumiller	Healdsburg, CA	4	Suffolk
31	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	5	Suffolk
32	Shirl	Shepherd	Spanish Fork, UT	5	Suffolk
33	Layne	Shepherd	Genola, UT	5	Suffolk
34	Mike	Cox	Fairview, UT	5	Suffolk
35	Jim	Stavros	Fairview, UT	5	Suffolk

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36	Chris	Stavros	Salt Lake City, UT	4	Suffolk
37	Brent	Shepherd	Spanish Fork, UT	5	Suffolk
38	Reed	Shepherd	Moroni, UT	5	Suffolk
39	Anna	Odendall (Estill)	Gerlach, NV	2	Suffolk
40	Dawson	Shepherd	Genola, UT	5	Suffolk
41	Brian	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	4	Suffolk
42	Blair & Gina	Summey	Lincoln, CA	4	Suffolk
43	Mike	Mann	New Cuyama, CA	3	Suffolk
44	John	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	3	Suffolk
45	Lloyd	McCabe	Dixon, CA	3	Suffolk
46	Larry & Linda	Pauly	Delta, UT	4	Suffolk
47	Brady	Olsen	Santaquin, UT	5	Suffolk
48	Cole	Estill	Winnemucca, NV	2	Suffolk
49	Corey	Withers	Delta, UT	5	Suffolk
50	Amanda	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	3	Suffolk
51	Joseph	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	5	Suffolk
52	Matt	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	5	Suffolk
53	David	Hansen	Fairview, UT	4	Suffolk
54	Kurt & Carol	Heupel	Weldona, CO	4	Suffolk
55	Joel	Shepherd	Moroni, UT	5	Suffolk
56	Jim	Neumiller	Healdsburg, CA	3	Suffolk
57	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	5	Suffolk
58	Shirl	Shepherd	Spanish Fork, UT	5	Suffolk
59	Layne	Shepherd	Genola, UT	5	Suffolk
60	Mike	Cox	Fairview, UT	5	Suffolk
61	Jim	Stavros	Fairview, UT	5	Suffolk
62	Chris	Stavros	Salt Lake City, UT	4	Suffolk
63	Brent	Shepherd	Spanish Fork, UT	5	Suffolk
64	Reed	Shepherd	Moroni, UT	5	Suffolk
65	Anna	Odendall (Estill)	Gerlach, NV	3	Suffolk

Round 4 - Crossbred Range Rams

<u>Lot #</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>City, State</u>	<u># Head/Lot</u>	<u>Breed</u>
66	David	Hansen	Fairview, UT	4	Crossbred
67	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	5	Crossbred
68	Brady	Olsen	Santaquin, UT	5	Crossbred
69	Matt	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	5	Crossbred
70	Joel	Shepherd	Moroni, UT	5	Crossbred
71	Brian	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	3	Crossbred
72	Mike	Cox	Fairview, UT	5	Crossbred
73	Joseph	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	3	Crossbred
74	Mike	Mann	New Cuyama, CA	3	Crossbred
75	Corey	Withers	Delta, UT	5	Crossbred
76	John	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	3	Crossbred
77	Reed	Shepherd	Moroni, UT	3	Crossbred
78	Jorgen	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	3	Crossbred
79	David	Hansen	Fairview, UT	4	Crossbred
80	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	5	Crossbred
81	Brady	Olsen	Santaquin, UT	5	Crossbred
82	Matt	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	5	Crossbred

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Round 5 - All Other Breeds Range Rams

<u>Lot #</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>City, State</u>	<u># Head/Lot</u>	<u>Breed</u>
83	Mike	Mann	New Cuyama, CA	2	Oxford
84	Brent	Shepherd	Spanish Fork, UT	5	Hampshire
85	Mike	Mann	New Cuyama, CA	2	Hampshire
86	Nancy	East	Alturas, CA	3	Composite
87	Nancy	East	Alturas, CA	3	Composite

Round 6 - Suffolk Range Rams

<u>Lot #</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>City, State</u>	<u># Head/Lot</u>	<u>Breed</u>
88	Brian	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	4	Suffolk
89	Blair & Gina	Summey	Lincoln, CA	4	Suffolk
90	Mike	Mann	New Cuyama, CA	2	Suffolk
91	Lloyd	McCabe	Dixon, CA	3	Suffolk
92	Larry & Linda	Pauly	Delta, UT	4	Suffolk
93	Brady	Olsen	Santaquin, UT	5	Suffolk
94	Cole	Estill	Winnemucca, NV	2	Suffolk
95	Joseph	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	5	Suffolk
96	Matt	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	5	Suffolk
97	David	Hansen	Fairview, UT	4	Suffolk
98	Kurt & Carol	Heupel	Weldona, CO	4	Suffolk
99	Joel	Shepherd	Moroni, UT	5	Suffolk
100	Jim	Neumiller	Healdsburg, CA	3	Suffolk
101	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	5	Suffolk
102	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	5	Suffolk
103	Shirl	Shepherd	Spanish Fork, UT	5	Suffolk
104	Mike	Cox	Fairview, UT	5	Suffolk
105	Jim	Stavros	Fairview, UT	5	Suffolk
106	Chris	Stavros	Salt Lake City, UT	4	Suffolk
107	Brent	Shepherd	Spanish Fork, UT	5	Suffolk
108	Anna	Odendall (Estill)	Gerlach, NV	3	Suffolk
109	Larry & Linda	Pauly	Delta, UT	2	Suffolk
110	Brady	Olsen	Santaquin, UT	5	Suffolk
111	Cole	Estill	Winnemucca, NV	2	Suffolk
112	Joseph	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	3	Suffolk
113	David	Hansen	Fairview, UT	4	Suffolk
114	Kurt & Carol	Heupel	Weldona, CO	4	Suffolk
115	Joel	Shepherd	Moroni, UT	5	Suffolk
116	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	5	Suffolk
117	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	5	Suffolk
118	Mike	Cox	Fairview, UT	5	Suffolk
119	Jim	Stavros	Fairview, UT	5	Suffolk
120	Chris	Stavros	Salt Lake City, UT	4	Suffolk
121	Brent	Shepherd	Spanish Fork, UT	2	Suffolk
122	Anna	Odendall (Estill)	Gerlach, NV	4	Suffolk
123	Brady	Olsen	Santaquin, UT	3	Suffolk
124	Cole	Estill	Winnemucca, NV	2	Suffolk
125	David	Hansen	Fairview, UT	4	Suffolk
126	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	5	Suffolk
127	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	5	Suffolk
128	Chris	Stavros	Salt Lake City, UT	2	Suffolk

2022 California Ram Sale

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129	Brent	Shepherd	Spanish Fork, UT	3	Suffolk
130	David	Hansen	Fairview, UT	2	Suffolk
131	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	5	Suffolk

Round 7 - Crossbred Range Rams

<u>Lot #</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>City, State</u>	<u># Head/Lot</u>	<u>Breed</u>
132	Joel	Shepherd	Moroni, UT	5	Crossbred
133	Brian	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	2	Crossbred
134	Mike	Cox	Fairview, UT	5	Crossbred
135	Joseph	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	2	Crossbred
136	Mike	Mann	New Cuyama, CA	3	Crossbred
137	John	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	5	Crossbred
138	Reed	Shepherd	Moroni, UT	2	Crossbred
139	David	Hansen	Fairview, UT	4	Crossbred
140	Brady	Olsen	Santaquin, UT	5	Crossbred
141	Matt	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	5	Crossbred
142	Mike	Cox	Fairview, UT	5	Crossbred
143	David	Hansen	Fairview, UT	4	Crossbred
144	Brady	Olsen	Santaquin, UT	3	Crossbred
145	Mike	Cox	Fairview, UT	5	Crossbred
146	David	Hansen	Fairview, UT	4	Crossbred
147	Mike	Cox	Fairview, UT	5	Crossbred
148	David	Hansen	Fairview, UT	2	Crossbred

102nd Annual California Ram Sale Tentative Schedule

9:00 am	Buyer Check-In Opens & Ram Preview Begins
9:30 am	Trade Show Opens
11:30 am	Complimentary BBQ Lamb Buyer Lunch
1:00 pm	102 nd Annual Ram Sale Auction Begins

Hotel Information

Best Western

1051 N. Blackstone St., Tulare, CA 93274

Phone: 559-688-7537

Room Rates: \$118.79

Group Code: California Wool Growers Association

2022 California Ram Sale

HERDtheNews! Save the Date!



We are excited to announce that we will be headed to Minden Nevada for
our 2022
California Wool Growers Association Convention.

Where: Carson Valley Inn
1627 U.S. Hwy 395 N
Minden, NV 89423

When: August 19th-August 20th, 2022

- 2022 will signify our 162nd Annual California Wool Growers Association Convention
and we want you to join us!
- Stay tuned for more details! We will have a schedule in an upcoming newsletter!
- We can't wait to let you know what we have in store for events at the convention.

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Using Electronic ID tags to Improve Flock Production and Health

Credit to: Julie Finzel

Producer Feedback

Using electronic ID tags to track and record individual animal performance data streamlines genetic selection in sheep flocks. Producers who have used EID's say:

- "...saves ranch hands time and labor while increasing information accuracy." MT producer
- "We culled ewes that were costing us money and decreased grafting in the lambing shed." MT producer
- "Increased percent lambs weaned from 85% to 115% and decreased medical costs per ewe by more than \$10/head." CA producer

EID's and Large, Commercial Flocks

Given the potential for EID's to facilitate genetic change that improves the bottom line for sheep producers, we wanted to do a study that considered opportunities for the application of EID's in large, commercial sheep flocks. Working with five ranches across California we tagged and sampled about 2,500 rams and lambs; mostly lambs. Genetic samples were submitted to Superior's Flock 54 program. Using the genetic analysis we determined parentage and connected lamb carcass traits to sires, see Figures 1 and 2. Data analysis presented is preliminary; we hope to have a more complete review and detailed analysis to share within 6 months.

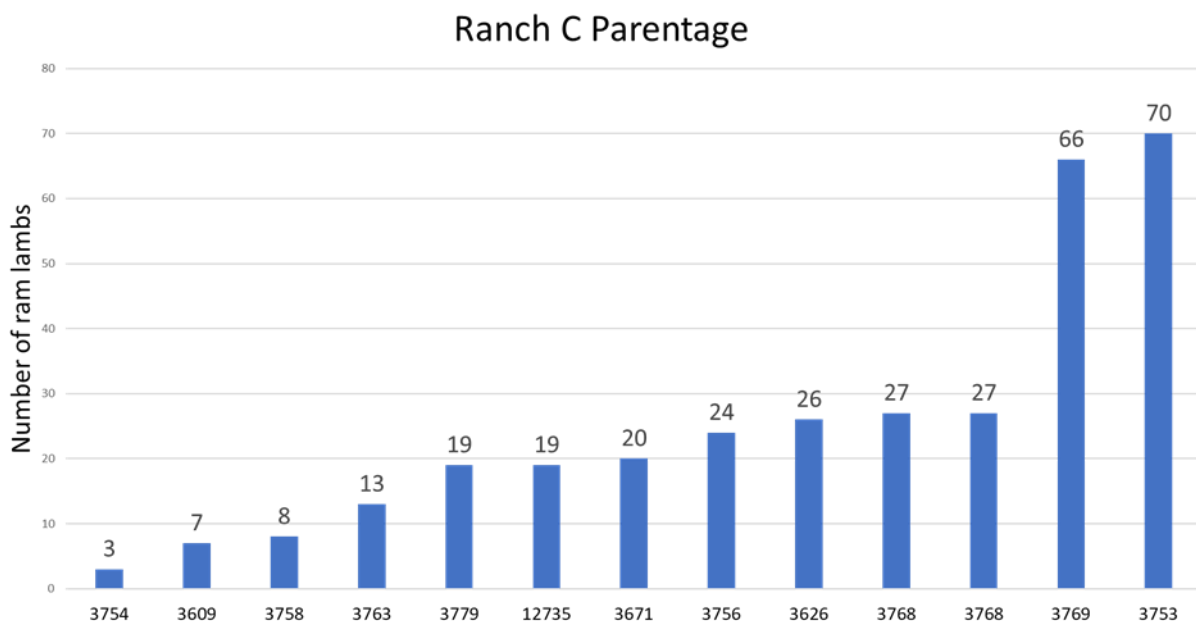


Figure 1) Number of lambs sired by ram for ranch C.

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Using Electronic ID tags to Improve Flock Production and Health cont...

Ranch A	Hot Weight	Yield Grade	Quality Grade	Breast	Rack	OCC Yield
n=209						
AVERAGE	73.5	2.7		8.9	8.2	67.8
STD	10.2	0.5		1.8	1.2	1.1
MIN	50.4	1.4	Good	4.4	5.1	63.9
MAX	102.4	4.2	Choice	14.2	12	72.6

Ranch B	Hot Weight	Yield Grade	Quality Grade	Breast	Rack	OCC Yield
n=315						
AVERAGE	76.1	2.7		9.5	8.7	67.3
STD	11.6	0.5		2.0	1.4	1.1
MIN	41.1	1.4	Good	3.4	4.3	64.3
MAX	106.9	4.6	Prime	14.6	12.5	71.4

Figure 2) Carcass traits of lambs from ranches A and B

On your operation...

There are two key points to keep in mind when considering transitioning to EID's as a tool for genetic selection

- Desire to see improvement in your flock
- Clearly defined objectives

In the case where a producer is mostly satisfied with the performance of their flock, EID's may not be the right choice. If a producer sees opportunity for improvement in their flock and they have some key areas in mind, EID's could be an effective tool. For example, maybe a producer would like to increase the number of lambs weaned per ewe exposed. There are a few traits that could be tracked using EID's to increase the number of weaned lambs, they include: birthing rate of ewes (percent ewes bred and lambd), twinning rate of ewes (more lambs born), mothering ability of ewes (ewes that can count to 2), and lamb vigor (greater lamb survival in the first critical hours after birth).

There are many things to consider when transitioning to using EID's. One idea is to test the tags and process on a portion of the flock first and scale up later. It's important to monitor progress towards goals and be patient as breeding stock changes and replacement animals reach maturity. In some cases, producers may be interested in EID's but looking for a way to make simple changes in their flock first. The most effective way to create change in a flock is through careful sire selection. If a Suffolk ram has two productive years he will produce, on average 80-100 lambs. The most productive ewe will likely only bear about 10 lambs during her lifetime. Producers can use Estimated Breeding Values (EBV's) to select the best rams available for their flock. Careful culling of non-productive animals is also a highly effective way to create rapid change.

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Using Electronic ID tags to Improve Flock Production and Health cont...

Summary

After a record high of 56 million sheep in the U.S. in 1952, sheep numbers have steadily declined and continue to fall 1-2% each year. Meanwhile, over 60% of lamb consumed in the U.S. is imported. In other words, there is incredible opportunity in the lamb industry in California and across the U.S. to supply a high-quality, in-demand, domestic product. Careful selection of breeding stock through strategic culling, using EBV's to select rams, or using EID's to track important production traits are some of the tools producers can use to take advantage of this opportunity.

Additional resources

- Macon, D. 2018. Electronic Identification Systems for Small-scale Livestock Producers: A Case Study. Publication #31-1009. November 2018
 - <https://ucanr.edu/sites/Livestock/files/294788.pdf>
- Sheep Stuff Ewe Should Know Podcast: Tech Tools to Better Manage Data. June 4, 2020
- American Lamb Board - Lamb Resource Center – Productivity Resources
 - <https://www.lambresourcecenter.com/productivity-resources> (scroll down...)
- Leading Edge Sheep Production – Mickel Brothers Sheep Company and NSIP rams
 - <http://nsip.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Leading-Edge-Final-Report.pdf>
- National Sheep Improvement Center and Sheep Genetics USA
 - <http://nsip.org/>
 - <https://sheepgeneticsusa.org/>

Wool Assurance Program Up and Going for 2022 Wool Season

The American Wool Assurance Program (AWA) is now up and running.

The voluntary industry program developed by the American Sheep Industry and Colorado State University focuses on “year-round animal care related to sheep production with an emphasis on animal welfare connected to wool production.”

The program is based on the international standards of the five freedoms; freedom from hunger and thirst; discomfort, pain, injury, or disease; fear and distress; and freedom to express normal behavior.

Heather Pearce, wool production program manager for ASI, offered an update on the program at the recent American Sheep Industry Assn. Annual Convention here. Pearce says it covers year-round practices though there is heavy emphasis on shearing. She also

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Wool Assurance Program Up and Going for 2022 Wool Season cont...

noted that there are multiple levels or tiers.

"This is for both the grower and the buyer to find the level that fits well for them," Pearce explained.

To date, there are 102 members signed up for the program. Of the producers, about 19 percent are considered "large" commercial operations and 32 percent farm flock operations, Pearce said. The remaining 50 percent or so are in the niche market.

Additionally, to date, 28 people have already gone through the level one certification and are AWA educated.

In her opening comments, she reiterated the desire by end-users to know more about the wool product, how it is produced and that animals are handled humanely, to name but a few. They also want a story. Pearce told participants that the AWA program is designed to help tell the story about the practices that growers are following to get their clip to market. It is also a form of traceability and should enable those participating in the AWA program access to more markets. Ultimately, in theory, offer production practices that are worth a premium to many buyers, processors and brands. However, ASI always recommends that growers talk to their warehouse or buyer to determine what is right for their operation.

Level I entails a grower enrolling as a member of AWA followed by an online course for sheep safety and quality assurance and then some AWA online courses about best practices, proper care and management related to wool production. Pearce stressed that there are no fees to be a member of the program or to complete the first level.

Level II adds development and implementation of an operating plan and maintaining records for each of the AWA standards as well as an independent evaluation done by a second party auditor. Those auditors would typically be an extension agent knowledgeable about the sheep business or a veterinarian. The second party audit is required every other year.

Level III is similar except that the audit is conducted by a third-party auditor every four years, a second party audit every other year. The third-party certified auditors work for an independent company specializing in performing livestock audit services.

Growers are responsible for costs to complete evaluations and audits for Level II and III certifications, said Pearce.

Designed to help defray costs, a new level, ranch or farm group certification, is just out. As she explained, growers go through Level I and then each member of the group goes through the second party audit every other year and a portion of the group will be required to do the third-party audit. Ranch group membership requires a fee to cover shared auditing costs.

Just released is the AWA guide which breaks down the program to discuss the various level details and differences as well as the difference between second party and third-party auditors as well as some of the items on which growers will be audited.

Ruth Woiwode, ASI consultant, for the American Wool Assurance program, told the group that a great deal of effort has gone into the process of training evaluators and selecting a third-party vendor. Also, great consideration has been given to building a culture of understanding among auditors of what's at stake when visiting an operation.

"The evaluator or auditor is a guest on site," said Woiwode. "The onus is on them to do a good job of seeing what they need to see without interfering with business as usual."

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Wool Assurance Program Up and Going for 2022 Wool Season cont...

She admitted it is one of the bigger challenges. Additionally, so that there is transparency throughout the process the audit tool will be made available to the grower ahead of time.

"None of those things should be a surprise in terms of what the standard is, and how they're being evaluated to it," she stressed.

If something is deemed to be amiss, then the evaluator works with the producer to develop a corrective action plan.

Pearce told the group that second party evaluators applied in November and were trained and accepted. Those accepted then went through two months of training involving several online trainings and virtual sessions, as well as a written and oral exam.

"The biggest requirement for us was that they have previous sheep experience; many had grown up on a sheep operation," said Pearce. "We now have 17 certified evaluators."

Third party auditors wishing to be considered for AWA were asked to submit a proposal. ASI has chosen one and is now working on getting an agreement on paper. Third party auditors have to go through the same training as the evaluators, but they also have to do some "shadow audits" to ensure everyone is on the same page when it comes to the actual auditing process, Pearce said. Also, every auditor asks the same set of questions.

"We expect them to uphold the program and maintain confidentiality, so everything that they observe is considered confidential and the documents are only to be shared with ASI and with the grower."

There were some questions about cost. Specific to the evaluators, Pearce said it is up to them to decide what they will charge. For the auditors, approximately \$500 fee, plus travel expenses.

There was a question about how the shearers perceive the program. There has been some concern voiced about the program interfering with their ability to get the job done in a timely fashion and another is that the onus is put on the shearers themselves. Pearce however, clarified and stressed that the onus is strictly on the grower. Additionally, the audit does not necessarily have to be done during shearing but rather some handling event.

ASI is working on USDA certification and hopes to hear back and finalize all of that very soon. To that point, one of the participants voiced concern about the confidentiality and having the information possibly turned over to USDA. Pearce stressed that it is the actual AWA program that is awaiting USDA certification. That essentially enables there to be a logo on USDA's website that says the program is USDA approved.

"None of the information goes through USDA at all," Pearce assured.

Woiwode added that the USDA certification is not about information sharing at all but rather about validating that the processes are occurring as the program states they are.

"The audit report, the instrument, is the property of those who paid for it," Woiwode reiterated. "Also, one of the things that can be part of the written contract with a third-party vendor can be something as straightforward as them providing a data management plan of how that data will be kept secure."

More information is available about the program on the American Wool Assurance website.

By Colleen Schreiber

HERDtheNews!

California Interim Wolf Compensation Plan

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) has announced an interim Wolf Livestock Loss Compensation Grant Program, which would allocate funds for wolf impacts on livestock.

The funding was approved by the California Legislature in 2021 through Senate Bill 170. Producers are able to apply for fair market value compensation for animals lost to probable or confirmed predation as of Sept. 23, 2021.

"The stakeholder group has been working diligently to advise CDFW on a fair compensation program that will adequately compensate producers for both the effects of wolf presence on livestock and for any losses that may occur," said the California Cattlemen's Association (CCA) in its Legislative Bulletin.

"There is currently no timeline for when the full pilot program will be released, but CCA will update members with any new information."

To receive an application for the interim program, email: Wolfprogram@wildlife.ca.gov

Utah sheep ranchers invent new product out of leftover wool

Two brothers from Croydon may have just invented a product that could keep sheep farmers employed for years to come.

"It's a game changer. It could save the sheep industry here in Utah," said sheep farmer Logan Wilde.

Wilde and his brother Albert are sixth-generation sheep ranchers in the town northeast of Salt Lake City.

In the past few months, Logan Wilde said his brother approached him with an idea to make some money on the side.

"I was like, 'Oh man, here we go again,'" Logan Wilde said with a laugh.

Now, that idea is grabbing some attention from people across the country.

"They're like 'wow,'" Albert Wilde said of his invention. "Who would have thought you could take waste wool and do something with it?"

The Wilde brothers say only 75 percent of a sheep's wool is good enough to be used for clothing, the other 25 percent usually gets thrown away. But Albert Wilde thought of a way to take that trash and turn a profit.

"This is something no one has ever heard of before," Albert Wilde said. "We take that wool, and we make it into small pellets and then use that in gardening to put into plants."

Albert Wilde explains that the wool can hold 10 times its weight in water, which is helpful for plants for nourishment.

The brothers say the product has only been available for a month, but already they've sold over 500 units and have had inquiries from all over the world.

By: Jeff McAdam

HERDtheNews!

Upcoming Events

April 9th, 2022

**102nd Annual California Ram Sale
International Agri-Center, Tulare, CA**

August 19th – 20th, 2022

**162nd California Wool Growers Association
Annual Meeting and Convention
Carson Valley Inn, Minden, NV**

August 19th, 2022

**Board of Directors Meeting
Carson Valley Inn, Minden, NV**

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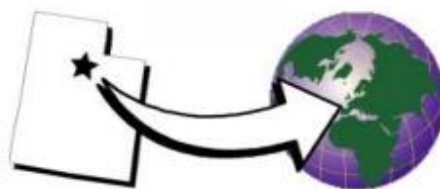
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Survey

March 16, 2022

This survey is a result of questions that were raised by the Member Services Committee last year (2021). We are asking you to take a few minutes of your time to address these five questions. Once completed, please either mail your responses to:

Lloyd McCabe
7933 Jah Road
Dixon, CA 95620

Or, send them via email to: Lmbarmacfarms@gmail.com. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Dr. Lloyd McCabe, Chairperson
Member Services Committee

1. Should we once again examine a name change to possible widen our membership base?

Yes or No.

If Yes, what name change would you suggest? If No, what suggestions do you have to encourage other related breed Associations or Wool Associations to join our organization?

2. What other things can we as an Association do to increase our income? What services, medicine, vaccines, or supplies should we consider furnishing?

3. Should we sponsor a livestock judging contest for 4-H and FFA members at the California Ram Sale? Could this activity attract young buyers or is this too time consuming given the nature of the Ram Sale?

4. What changes, if any, would you like to see occur at the California Ram Sale?

5. How do we deliver services to all members? Are we currently delivering services to all members?